

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

Figures 7A and 7B have been amended and Figure 7C has been added. No new matter is added.

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

I. Status of the Claims

Claims 1-8 are currently pending.

Claim 1 has been amended, no new matter has been added.

II. Status of the Specification and Drawings

Figures 7A and 7B have been amended and Figure 7C has been added. Accordingly, the Specification has been amended to add the description of the figures. No new matter is added. Support for the amendments are illustrated in Figures 7A and 7B as filed. Both the center of the clamp member and the center line of the opening are inherent in the elements. Further, the slopes of the chamfered portions are consistently illustrated and now a reference plane is added solely for clarification of the direction of the slope.

III. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,761,327 to Shiga et al. (“Shiga”). The Examiner states that Shiga discloses all the elements of the claims. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite that the “chamfered portions hav[e] a slope orthogonal to a plane passing between a center axis of the cylindrical body and a center line of the opening.” This element is illustrated in Figures 7A, 7B and 7C. The chamfered portions 86, 86 are orthogonal to a plane 800. The plane 800 passes between the center axis 802 of the cylindrical body 82 and the center line 804 of the opening 82a.

In contrast, Shiga discloses a clamp 62 having an inclined guide surface 64 in Fig. 36 (attached hereto as Exhibit A, annotated). The end face 62c in the clamp 62 is obliquely cut on opposite sides of the slit S to form the surface 64 (*see*, Shiga, column 20, lines 35 to 37). Shiga's inclined guide surface 64 is formed by oblique cuts on opposite sides of the slit S. The cuts form line m at the boundary between the end face 62c and the surface 64 and line n at the boundary between the slit S and the surface 64. The lines m and n are substantially parallel to each other as shown in Exhibit A.

The chamfered portions, as claimed in claim 1, have a slope orthogonal to the plane 800 and do not have the parallel lines as disclosed and suggested by Shiga. Thus, claim 1 is not anticipated or unpatentable over Shiga. Further, claims 2-8 depend from claim 1 and are allowable at least based on their dependency to claim 1. Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number indicated below once he has reviewed the proposed amendment if the Examiner believes any issue can be resolved through either a Supplemental Response or an Examiner's Amendment.

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Respectfully submitted,

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U.S. Patent

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Sheet 23 of 25

US 6,761,327 B2

FIG. 36

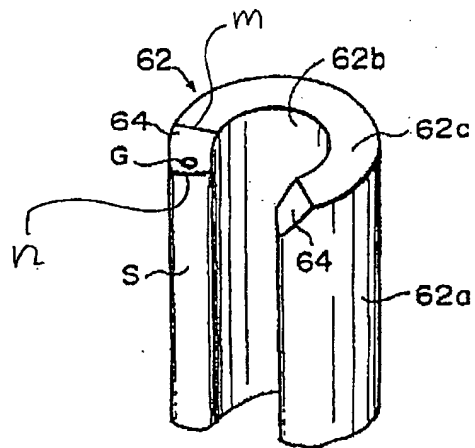


FIG. 37

